

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1 to 19. (Canceled).

20. (Currently Amended) The fuel injector as recited in claim 25 [[19]], wherein the flexible section includes: a) an axial portion that extends axially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston; and b) a radial portion that extends radially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston.

21. (Currently Amended) The fuel injector as recited in claim 25 [[19]], wherein the flexible section has the shape of one of a perforated disk and a sleeve.

22. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 20, wherein the flexible section is elastic and made of an elastomer.

23. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 20, wherein the at least one spring element has a helical form.

24. (Canceled).

25. (Currently Amended) A [[The]] fuel injector as recited in claim 24, comprising: a valve-closure member cooperating with a valve-seat surface to form a sealing seat; one of a piezoelectric actuator and a magnetostrictive actuator which activates the valve-closure member;

a hydraulic coupler which includes a master piston and a slave piston, wherein a coupler volume exists between the master piston and the slave piston, and wherein the master piston and the slave piston are axially displaceable with respect to each other, and wherein the coupler volume is connected to a compensating chamber via a throttle;

a flexible section which at least partially delimits the compensating chamber; and at least one spring element which one of directly and indirectly exerts pressure on the flexible section from outside the coupler volume, via fixed components;

wherein;

the coupler volume, the throttle and the compensating chamber are filled with a hydraulic medium; and

the spring element is braced on the master piston via a sleeve-shaped holder, and wherein the sleeve-shaped holder is fixed in place on the master piston in an immovable manner.

26. (Currently Amended) A [[The]] fuel injector ~~as recited in claim 24~~, comprising: a valve-closure member cooperating with a valve-seat surface to form a sealing seat; one of a piezoelectric actuator and a magnetostrictive actuator which activates the valve-closure member;

a hydraulic coupler which includes a master piston and a slave piston, wherein a coupler volume exists between the master piston and the slave piston, and wherein the master piston and the slave piston are axially displaceable with respect to each other, and wherein the coupler volume is connected to a compensating chamber via a throttle;

a flexible section which at least partially delimits the compensating chamber; and at least one spring element which one of directly and indirectly exerts pressure on the flexible section from outside the coupler volume, via fixed components;

wherein;

the coupler volume, the throttle and the compensating chamber are filled with a hydraulic medium;

the spring element is braced on the master piston; and

the spring element acts on the flexible section via an intermediate ring.

27. (Canceled).

28. (Currently Amended) A [[The]] fuel injector ~~as recited in claim 27~~, comprising: a valve-closure member cooperating with a valve-seat surface to form a sealing seat; one of a piezoelectric actuator and a magnetostrictive actuator which activates the valve-closure member;

a hydraulic coupler which includes a master piston and a slave piston, wherein a coupler volume exists between the master piston and the slave piston, and wherein the master piston and the slave piston are axially displaceable with respect to each other, and wherein the coupler volume is connected to a compensating chamber via a throttle;

a flexible section which at least partially delimits the compensating chamber; and

at least one spring element which one of directly and indirectly exerts pressure on the flexible section from outside the coupler volume, via fixed components;

wherein;

the coupler volume, the throttle and the compensating chamber are filled with a hydraulic medium; and

the spring element is braced on a flange which is connected to the slave piston in an immovable manner, and wherein the flange is situated in a region of an end of the slave piston facing away from the coupler volume.

29. (Currently Amended) A [[The]] fuel injector as recited in claim 19, comprising: a valve-closure member cooperating with a valve-seat surface to form a sealing seat; one of a piezoelectric actuator and a magnetostrictive actuator which activates the valve-closure member;

a hydraulic coupler which includes a master piston and a slave piston, wherein a coupler volume exists between the master piston and the slave piston, and wherein the master piston and the slave piston are axially displaceable with respect to each other, and wherein the coupler volume is connected to a compensating chamber via a throttle;

a flexible section which at least partially delimits the compensating chamber; and at least one spring element which one of directly and indirectly exerts pressure on the flexible section from outside the coupler volume, via fixed components;

wherein;

the coupler volume, the throttle and the compensating chamber are filled with a hydraulic medium;

the spring element acts via a sleeve ring; [[,]] and ~~wherein~~

the sleeve ring has the form of a disk in the radial extension and the form of a sleeve on the outside in the axial extension.

30. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 20, wherein the spring element is annular.

31. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 30, wherein the spring element is open such that two ends of the spring element overlap, and wherein the two ends are rounded.

32. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 30, wherein the spring element extends radially around the flexible section.

33. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 30, wherein the spring element is made of steel.

34. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 30, wherein the spring element exerts no pressure on the flexible section in the unloaded state of the coupler.

35. (Currently Amended) The fuel injector as recited in claim 26 [[19]], wherein the throttle includes a throttling ball, which is guided by a throttling gap in an opening.

36. (Previously Presented) The fuel injector as recited in claim 35, wherein the throttling ball is braced on a surface of the master piston delimiting the coupler volume.

37. (New) The fuel injector as recited in claim 26, wherein the flexible section includes: a) an axial portion that extends axially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston; and b) a radial portion that extends radially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston.

38. (New) The fuel injector as recited in claim 28, wherein the flexible section includes: a) an axial portion that extends axially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston; and b) a radial portion that extends radially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston.

39. (New) The fuel injector as recited in claim 29, wherein the flexible section includes: a) an axial portion that extends axially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston; and b) a radial portion that extends radially with respect to the displacement direction of the master piston and the slave piston.

40. (New) The fuel injector as recited in claim 26, wherein the flexible section has the shape of one of a perforated disk and a sleeve.

41. (New) The fuel injector as recited in claim 28, wherein the flexible section has the shape of one of a perforated disk and a sleeve.

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42. (New) The fuel injector as recited in claim 29, wherein the flexible section has the shape of one of a perforated disk and a sleeve.